creation of facilities for the pilgrims and other activities for development of Sabarimala Temple have to be co-terminus with the time period of the proposed Master Plan available with the State Government.

Census of wild animals in Jharkhand

†2948. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether census of wild animals of important species including tiger has been carried out in Jharkhand on the direction of the Central Government;

(b) if so, the figures of this census; and

(c) the steps taken for protection of tiger and other wild animals of important species in Jharkhand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Phase-I of the All India estimation of tiger, co-predators and prey animals has been carried out in all tiger States including Jharkhand, using the refined methodology approved by the Tiger Task Force. Since the process requires completion of several other phases, indication of numbers is not possible at this stage.

(c) The steps taken by the Government of India to protect tigers and other wildlife are given in the Statement.

Statement

Steps taken by the Government for protection and conservation of tigers and other wildlife

(i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

(ii) Several rare and endangered species of wild animals have been included in the Schedules of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, thereby giving it highest degree of protection.

(iii) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended and made more stringent. The punishment in cases of offences has been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

equipment, vehicle or weapon that has been used for committing any wild life offence.

(iv) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehended and prosecute wildlife offenders.

(v) Government of India has set up Regional and Sub-regional Offices for wildlife preservation in major export and trade centres of the country to prevent smuggling of wild animals and their products.

(vi) Financial and technical help is provided to the States under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, *viz.* Project Tiger, Project Elephant and Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure of the States for providing effective protection to wild animals.

(vii) A National Wildlife Action Plan 2002-16 was adopted by the Indian Board for Wild life under the chairmanship of Prime Minister in January 2002. The plan outlines the strategy for conservation and protection of wildlife in the country.

(viii) Government of India is a signatory to many international conventions concerning biodiversity conservation and control of illegal trade in wild flora and fauna.

(ix) Bilateral agreements have been signed with Nepal and Republic of China for controlling trans-boundary illegal trade in wildlife.

(x) A Global Tiger Forum of Tiger Range Countries has been created for addressing international issues related to tiger conservation.

(xi) Action has been taken for implementing the urgent recommendation of Tiger Task Force and creation of National Wildlife Crime Control Bureau.

Modification of Coastal Regulation Zone guidelines

2949. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has received any proposal/demand to modify Coastal Regulation Zone guidelines for the coastal areas in country to give